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ABSTRACT

New Jersey requires an annual evaluation and classification of schools based on: development and implementation of an educational plan, achievement of statewide standards in basic skills, and compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Guidelines for the evaluation criteria and procedures are given. Data are collected through the monitoring of schools and districts by county office staff, annual school district reports, mandated evaluation reports, results of annual testing of basic skills, and on-site visits. Steps in developing a plan include setting local goals, providing for public involvement, planning for needs assessment, and requiring program improvement efforts. Both state and local school districts establish criteria to evaluate the implementation of this educational plan. Each district with students below state minimum standards is required to develop a basic skills improvement program, which is evaluated annually by the school district and monitored by the county offices. Students in need of remediation must receive proper help. Since compliance with state and federal regulations does not apply equally to all districts, evaluation criteria are in four general categories: provision of mandated services to eligible students; appropriate use of funds; compliance with required programs; and compliance with all specific criteria in applicable regulations. (MH)

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GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS IN NEW JERSEY

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Prepared under the direction
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New Jersey State Department of Education
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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

The primary goal of the public schools of New Jersey is to ensure that all youngsters in New Jersey develop the skills necessary to function politically, economically and socially in our society. It is my firm conviction that all children, with the possible exception of those with severe disabilities, can master these basic skills and leave school prepared to cope with the demands of adulthood. I believe this is a feasible goal even though we are far from achieving it at present. This goal is the motivation behind our continuing efforts to improve educational practice and ensure equal opportunity for all children.

As educators it is essential that we not lose sight of this goal, or be deterred by convenient arguments that factors beyond our control determine what and how much children learn. While some social scientists, unfortunately, have succeeded in persuading much of the public and many in the educational profession that schools cannot make a significant difference in the lives of children, there is a growing body of research that supports the contention that good schools can and do make a difference. We must make effective use of this knowledge about effective schools in our efforts to improve education in New Jersey.

The educational needs identified through the evaluation process described in this document are not just a local responsibility. The Thorough and Efficient legislation has mandated a state and local partnership to improve education. It is the role of the state to bring educators and citizens together to address their local educational goals

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and solve educational problems. In support of these local initiatives, the state must focus its own resources on the schools and districts with the most serious needs. When patterns of need are identified which cannot be resolved with existing resources, it is the responsibility of my office to bring these issues to the attention of the governor and legislature and to seek appropriate remedies.

Although the state and local districts share responsibility for this undertaking, successful efforts at educational improvement depend upon the commitment, leadership and energies of educators and citizens at the school and district level. The best solutions to local educational problems are usually those invented or adopted by the people closest to the situation. To assist such local efforts, the state must disseminate knowledge about effective practices and policies to local district staff. Ultimately, the local staff will implement any improvements in educational services and the degree of their success will depend upon their skill and the willingness of the public to support their efforts.

The evaluation and classification process will increase public knowledge of the conditions in school districts and schools. Public attention will be focused on the identified problems and this will build support for the improvement efforts needed to provide a thorough and efficient system of public schools.

Evaluation and classification are forces for change. We all must work together to improve the educational opportunities open to our children. Only through understanding and cooperation will we realize the full benefits of this effort, and thereby move closer to our goal of preparing each youngster for adulthood.

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The New Jersey State Board of Education and the New Jersey State Department of Education are committed to the goal of a quality education for each child in New Jersey. In 1975, the courts and the legislature focused the public's attention on education through the Robinson vs. Cahill case, the passage of the Public School Education Act, and the subsequent adoption of a state income tax. These state actions became the framework for a statewide effort to improve our schools.

New Jersey schools have made significant progress since 1975. The great majority of our students pass the Minimum Basic Skills test. New Jersey has a national reputation for providing programs of quality for the handicapped and is among the leaders in serving the needs of bilingual students. New Jersey is one of the few states that provide significant state resources for compensatory education. In addition, local and state efforts to encourage citizen participation in the educational system have made considerable progress in the last few years.

Overall, we can be proud of the achievements of the past five years. However, problems remain that require our attention and concentrated effort.

Our schools must prepare all our youth to be contributing adults in a society that may be quite different from the society in which they grew up. The pursuit of this goal begins with the delivery of effective services. The evaluation and classification of schools and districts

will reveal the places where concentrated efforts are needed to achieve that end. The procedures also will identify those schools and districts that can serve as models of effective practice. The improvement efforts resulting from classification will build support for the local schools that will help them fulfill their responsibility to their students.

The state board realized that many citizens would not routinely obtain and read lengthy documents on the local implementation of T&E and the state evaluations of their schools. Hence, the classification procedure was developed to attract public attention when serious school problems are identified by the state evaluation.

Classification is not a panacea. It is not, itself, a solution to instructional problems. Classification merely provides incentives for change. The department and local school districts must work together to ensure that we realize the benefits from the school improvement efforts that follow classification.

The members of the state board are optimistic about the possibilities of improving the services and programs provided to the children of New Jersey. We believe that through the cooperation of educators, parents, and local boards, every child can receive an educational program of quality.

P. Paul Ricci
President

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William Brooks, William Volk, Evelyn Ogden, Stephen Koffler and Kathleen Waldron prepared individual sections of the guidelines. Review and comments were provided by the commissioner of education, the deputy commissioner, assistant commissioners and their staff, and county superintendents and their staff. In addition, individuals outside the department submitted their remarks at various stages of review. William O'Donnell of the Public Information Office edited the final copy. Appreciation is expressed to these individuals for their time and valuable contributions to the final product.

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INTRODUCTION

The Public Education Act of 1975, known as the Thorough and Efficient Law (T&E), mandated a new system of accountability and improvement for the public schools of New Jersey. The law is unique among the accountability laws passed by state legislatures during the past decade because it proposes a three-way partnership among the state, the schools and the public. Each is asked to play a critical role in an effort to ensure all the children of New Jersey have access to a "thorough and efficient" system of education.

Under this partnership, citizens and educators are asked to work together to not only maintain but to improve their schools. T&E requires districts to evaluate their programs, to identify needs and to report their progress to the public. The state also evaluates schools and districts and identifies areas where improvements are needed. If the local district takes appropriate actions to meet these needs, the state provides support and assistance. However, if local efforts to correct deficiencies are inadequate, the law requires the state to meet its constitutional responsibility and protect the interests of children.

Specifically, Section 18A:7A-10 of the Public Education Act of 1975 states:

> For the purpose of evaluating the thoroughness and efficiency of all the public schools of the State, the commissioner, with the approval of the State Board and after review by the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, shall develop and administer a uniform, Statewide system for evaluating the performance of each school. Such a system shall be based in part on annual testing for achievement in

> basic skill areas, and in part on such other means as the commissioner deems proper in order to (a) determine pupil status and needs, (b) ensure pupil progress, and (c) assess the degree to which the educational objectives have been achieved.

The New Jersey State Board of Education further defined this statutory provision in the New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) (Appendix A). The code requires the annual evaluation and classification of schools to be based upon the development and implementation of an educational plan, the achievement of statewide standards in basic communication and computation and compliance with state and federal law and regulation.

In addition, in 1981 schools will be evaluated and classified on the progress made toward local goals, objectives and standards.

Districts will be evaluated and classified only on the development and implementation of the educational plan and compliance with state and federal law and regulation. Diagram I shows the areas evaluated, their application to schools and districts and the date of implementation.

Diagram I

Evaluation and Classification of Schools and Districts

Areas Evaluated	Schools	Districts
The Educational Plan	1980	1980
Basic Skills Performance	1980	not applicable
Progress Toward Local Goals and Objectives	1981	not applicable
Compliance with Law and Regulation	1980	1980

Organization of the Guidelines

These guidelines contain the criteria and procedures used in carrying out the evaluation and classification of each school and district. The organization of these guidelines follows the logic of the evaluation and classification process. Section I describes the procedures for collecting information and the various sources of information used by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Sections II through IV cover, in sequence, the areas to be evaluated in the school year 1979-80: the educational plan, achievement in the basic skills and compliance with law and regulation.

Section V describes the classification categories and how classification decisions are made.

The conditions under which districts must prepare and submit remedial plans are discussed in Section VI. This section also outlines the corrective action powers granted to the commissioner of education and the state board.

Timelines for the evaluation and classification process are contained in Section VII.

Section VII identifies some of the resources available to districts undertaking school improvement efforts.

Finally, Section IX describes the procedures for the 1980-81 school year when progress toward local goals and objectives is added as a fourth area for the evaluation and classification of schools.

SECTION I

THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Since 1976 the New Jersey State Department of Education has monitored the operations of schools and districts to gather information on their performance under T&E. Under this system, staff from the offices of the county superintendents visit schools and check for compliance with state and federal statutes and regulations. This procedure provides much of the information used in the evaluation and classification of schools and districts although other methods of data collection also are used. Specifically, the sources of information are:

- the monitoring of schools and districts by county office staff (Level I monitoring)
- the annual report submitted by school districts,
- specific district evaluation reports required by state or federal regulations,
- the results of annual testing in the basic skills and
- visits conducted at the request of the commissioner including monitoring by department program specialists (Level II monitoring) and comprehensive program reviews conducted by external teams.

Information from these sources is compiled and analyzed by county office staff to identify areas of deficiency or non-compliance with state or federal regulations. Each of these information sources is described below.

Level I Monitoring

Throughout the school year, county office staff, under the direction of the county superintendent, monitor the progress of local districts in implementing T&E, in improving basic skills programs and complying with requirements of mandated programs. This process is known as Level I monitoring.

Using a monitoring checklist county staff confer with district and school staff and visit each school to determine whether all programs are in compliance with state and federal law and regulations. A record is kept on these visits and each item is designated as "in compliance," "not in compliance," or "in progress".

Monitoring of districts and schools focuses on seven major areas:

- continuing activities of districts and schools as educational plans are developed and implemented,
- efforts to reach and maintain compliance in all requirements of law and code,
- improvement activities implemented during the year as reported in the annual report,
- activities or programs identified in the district budget as improvement activities or programs,
- activities or programs required by cap waiver decisions,

- activities included in approved remedial plans, and
- parent and community involvement programs pursuant to law and regulation.

As a result of the monitoring, the county superintendent submits to the chief school administrator and board secretary on June 1 an Annual Monitoring Report which includes recommendations for improvement and cites areas of non-compliance. Specific deficiencies are cited when the school or district is not in compliance.

Although all districts and schools are monitored during the year, the number of monitoring visits and their intensity vary from district-to-district and from school-to-school. It is the responsibility of the county superintendents to match the monitoring activities with the needs of districts and schools.

The Annual Report of School Districts

In the July 1 Annual Report, a district responds to the items cited in the Annual Monitoring Report. For each item, the district describes the activities to be implemented in the following school year to correct the problem.

In addition, a school district reports throughout the year on a number of topics. This information includes:

- demographic data related to each school,

- the number of and reasons for school dropouts,
- evidence of the effectiveness of the district and each school within the district in achieving district and school goals, objectives and standards,
- plans and programs for professional improvement,
- evidence of the effectiveness of remedial programs funded by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I and state compensatory education programs,
- plans for school improvement during the ensuing year including the district's plans to remediate deficiencies cited in the annual monitoring report,
- projected capital construction needs, and
- information on each school's fiscal operation including the district's audit report.

District Evaluation Reports Required by State or Federal Regulations

State and federal statutes and regulations for funded programs often require specific evaluation and reporting procedures. Examples of these requirements are the evaluation of vocational education programs, ESEA Title I programs, state compensatory education programs and special education programs. Reports on the programs are submitted by the district to the department. This information indicates if there is a need for alteration of the approved program plan, additional monitoring or specific improvements efforts.

Annual Testing in the Basic Skills

The department requires the annual administration of the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) communication and computation tests to public school students in grades three, six, nine and eleven. Students of limited English-speaking ability and some students classified as handicapped currently are exempted from taking these tests.

The MBS tests assess pupil competencies in specified communication and computation skills. The specifications for the tests are based on the input of over 30,000 educators, parents, citizens, and students and have not been changed during the three-year period of minimum basic skills testing. The constancy of the specifications allows comparisons of test score results to be made from one year to another. As a result, it is possible to undertake an analysis of basic skills performance in a given school or district from year-to-year to determine trends. However, it is not appropriate to compare results from different schools or districts. The test results are used by local districts to identify students who may require remedial instruction and to identify the skill areas in which they may need help.

In the evaluation and classification system, the results of MBS tests are used to identify schools in which the basic skills programs may require review and improvement. This is done by examining both the performance of students in each school on the MBS tests over a three-year period and the analysis of the trend of test results for that school.

If the performance over the three-year period is below the standards set by the state board and there is no trend toward improvement (i.e., a significantly larger percentage of students surpassing the standard), then the school is presumed to have a basic skills problem.

A comprehensive program review is conducted in the identified schools to determine if revisions are needed in the district's basic skills improvement plan. The district is afforded the opportunity to provide additional information to demonstrate that its program is effective or that adequate improvements already are being implemented. If such evidence is persuasive, the comprehensive program review is not conducted.

Visits Conducted at the Request of the Commissioner

In addition to the Level I monitoring program conducted by county staff, the commissioner may order special visits or program reviews where serious problems appear to exist. A program review may be initiated as a result of monitoring by county staff, regular monitoring activities by categorical program staff. The analyses of the results of the MBS tests or upon the request of a district.

There are two types of visits in addition to Level I monitoring. They differ in the purpose and scope of their inquiry and in the composition of the teams conducting the review. One is known as Level II monitoring; the other is referred to as the comprehensive program review.

Level II monitoring is conducted by program specialists from programs such as bilingual education, facilities planning and vocational education and usually is prompted by problems uncovered by the county monitoring process. Level II visits focus on one or more specific programs in one school or district and the results are reported to the county superintendent and the local district. The findings are incorporated into the annual monitoring report. These findings also are used as one basis for judging the adequacy of the improvement plans submitted in the annual report and may affect the classification of a district and a school.

The second type of visit, the comprehensive program review, applies only to schools with basic skills problems. The purpose of a comprehensive review is threefold. First, it will verify the nature and extent of any program deficiencies that affect basic skills performance of students. Second, the review will recommend a course of action to eliminate or alleviate such deficiencies and, finally, it will serve as a catalyst in the generation of local basic skills improvement efforts.

Where serious basic skills problems are presumed to exist, the commissioner will ask the county superintendent to form a team to visit the school in question. This team may be composed of educators from outside of the district, staff of the department of education and/or qualified members of the community. If several schools within a district are designated for comprehensive program review, the same external team may be asked to work with all the schools. If a district

has many schools undergoing a review, an orderly schedule will be developed to permit development of a timely remedial plan and effective improvement efforts.

The county superintendent also may ask the district to conduct a self-evaluation of the school to aid the external team and hasten the process of diagnosis and improvement. If a self-evaluation is conducted, a comprehensive review instrument designed by the department will be used to ensure that the critical factors are examined.

The external team will be trained by the department to examine factors such as:

- district policies and school management practices,
- staff knowledge of subject matter, attitudes and expectations,
- the basic skills program,
- instructional time,
- parent and community relations and
- the experience of a sample of students served by the school as described by school records and parental interviews.

The factors to be reviewed have been selected because research has shown them to be related to school effectiveness in the basic skills. The factors have been chosen because they are subject to change and are likely to have the most impact on the basic skills performance of students. The external team will report its findings to the county superintendent, the chief school administrator and the local board of education.

Conclusion

The information gathered from the sources described in this section provides the basis for the classifications of each school and district. Sections II-IV describe the criteria and methods used to analyze this information.

SUMMARY

- The Public School Education Act of 1975 requires the evaluation of each school by the department of education.

- The areas evaluated in each school are: the development and implementation of an educational plan, progress toward local goals and objectives (in 1980-81), achievement of statewide standards in the basic skills and compliance with law and regulation.

- The areas evaluated for each district are the development and implementation of an educational plan and compliance with law and regulation.

- Information for this evaluation comes from annual monitoring, the district annual report, mandated program evaluations, the results of annual testing in the basic skills and visits conducted at the request of the commissioner.

SECTION II

THE EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PLAN

The evaluation of the educational plan assesses the implementation of the local planning process required by the T&E law and code and the implementation of program improvement activities at the school and district level. Both schools and districts are evaluated and classified in this area.

Currently, most districts are completing the development of the educational plan. For the 1979-80 school year the evaluation is based upon progress in complying with statute and regulation concerning the educational plan. This includes the setting of local goals and objectives, provision for public involvement in goal setting and the incorporation of goals and objectives into the local program. It also includes provisions for the conduct of needs assessments, required program improvement efforts and plans for the evaluation of progress toward local goals, objectives and standards.

Content of the Educational Plan

The educational plan for a district and every school within the district specifies the activities, procedures and timelines to be used to promote program improvements. The major purposes of the plan are to:

- identify priorities for program improvement,
- align resources in the most efficient manner to attain goals,
- provide direction for teaching staff members,
- provide a structure for evaluating progress toward local goals and objectives and
- set the timelines for meeting the requirements of N.J.A.C. Title 6:8, subchapters 3 and 4 (the T&E planning requirements).

Evaluating the Educational Plan

Two sets of criteria are used to evaluate the development and implementation of the educational plan. The first set of criteria is specified in the administrative code and is included in the monitoring checklist used by county staff. Criteria, noted with N.J.A.C. citations, include:

- a timeline and budget to complete the implementation of NJAC subchapters 3 and 4 (6:8-3.1(c)),
- written district and school educational goals, adopted by the school board (6:8-3.2(a)),
- provisions for staff, student and community involvement in the development of goals (6:8-3.2(a)(b)),
- written educational objectives and standards for the educational program (curriculum) based upon district and school goals (6:8-3.3(a)),

- a procedure for evaluating and reporting pupil progress toward district and school goals and program objectives (6:8-4.1),
- written policies and procedures for pupil promotion and graduation (6:8-4.2(a)),
- in-service professional improvement programs to meet the priorities identified by the district or school (6:8-4.4(a)) and
- plans for the assessment of school and district needs to determine the status of long and short-range objectives (6:8-3.4(b)).

These criteria are set forth in subchapters 3 and 4 of Chapter 6 of the administrative code and must be part of the written plan for the district and each school within the district. Other sections of the subchapters are evaluated in the area of compliance with law and regulation.

The second set of criteria is developed by the district in response to its own needs assessment and the evaluation reports provided by the department. The criteria are listed as priorities for program improvement in the annual report.

County staff monitor the implementation of these improvement plans. If the activities undertaken by the district are for improvements that exceed state requirements, failure to implement the planned activities

will not affect the classification of the district or school. However, districts are expected to make good faith efforts toward improvement in order to meet their own goals, objectives and standards.

Failure to correct deficiencies or areas of non-compliance are identified by the department. Failure to implement planned improvements may result in the use of the corrective action authority of the commissioner. Remedial plans ordered and approved by the department are considered to be part of the educational plan for the school or district and therefore must constitute part of its improvement priorities. See Section VI for a complete discussion of remedial plans.

SUMMARY

- The educational plan is a written document for each district and every school within the district that describes how the district and its schools will achieve goals and make program improvements.

- The evaluation of the educational plan focuses on the implementation of the local planning process and the development and implementation of program improvement activities at both the school and district level.

- Both the district and each school within the district are evaluated and classified on the development and implementation of the educational plan.

- Two sets of criteria are used to determine the adequacy of the plan: the requirements in the administrative code concerning planning and the areas designated as priorities in the district's annual improvement plan.

SECTION III

THE EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE BASIC SKILLS

The Public School Education Act of 1975 specifically requires the commissioner to include annual testing for achievement in basic skills in the statewide system for evaluating each school (N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-10). State and federal law and regulation also set requirements for remedial services, local testing in the basic skills and basic skills improvement plans. The state evaluation of the effectiveness of the basic skills program in each school includes a review of all of these elements. Only schools will be classified in the area of the basic skills.

The evaluation of the basic skills program in a school covers five elements. The five elements are listed below and then discussed in more detail in the subsequent sections (N.J.S.A. or N.J.A.C. citations follow each item):

- development and implementation of a basic skills improvement plan (N.J.S.A. 7A-7),
- annual evaluation and revision of the basic skills improvement plan (N.J.S.A. 7A-7),
- remediation of all pupils confirmed as performing below the statewide minimum standards in communications and computation skills (N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.8(b)1),
- annual evaluation of remedial services supported by state compensatory education funds and/or ESEA Title I funds by the district according to state and federal regulations and guidelines (N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.8 (b5-6)),

- analysis of MBS test results over a three-year period to assess need for a program review.

In order for a school to be approved in the area of basic skills for a three-year period, all five criteria must be satisfied.

Basic Skills Improvement Plans

Each district with pupils below state minimum standards is required by law (N.J.S.A. 7A-7) to develop a basic skills improvement plan, and the plan must be approved by the department. The plan sets forth the goals and objectives, improvement strategies and implementation schedule for the district's basic skills improvement effort. It must cover each school within the district in which there are pupils performing below the state minimum standards.

The district's basic skills improvement plan must establish annual interim goals to ensure progress toward the goal of having all pupils achieve at least the statewide standards. Interim goals must represent a statistically significant gain which is equivalent to the definition of improvement used in the analysis of the MBS. (Appendix B)

The law states that the basic skills improvement plan may include curriculum changes, in-service programs, diagnostic, remedial or skill maintenance programs for pupils, consultations with parents and any other measure designed to promote progress. The plan must be evaluated by the district annually and revised when necessary.

The department has defined the basic skills improvement plan as a comprehensive plan that encompasses both the developmental and preventive and remedial programs. The purpose of the plan is to reduce the need for remediation which by implication means strengthening the developmental program. The plan should provide for the coordination and articulation of developmental and remedial programs. It also should include procedures for coordination of local, state and federal funds for basic skills instruction.

Good plans usually consider factors other than curricula or teaching techniques which can influence school effectiveness. Thus, in addition to activities such as changes in curricular materials, revision of objectives or adoption of new instructional methods; a good plan may incorporate scheduling or organizational changes designed to increase instructional time, a program to improve school attendance or the integration of developmental and remedial program planning. Changes in counseling, plans to improve parental involvement in their children's learning, activities designed to reduce violence or vandalism in a building or plans for a preschool parenting program might be included. In short, the plan should be designed to enhance organizational effectiveness and be based upon principles drawn from both experience and research.

The components of an acceptable basic skills improvement plan are similar to those defined for remedial plans on p. 54. An adequate plan should contain:

- a statement of needs,
- goals for improvement,
- a description and justification of the general improvement strategy(ies) selected,
- interim goals and benchmarks to monitor progress,
- a timetable for implementation,
- identification of resources to implement the plan,
- an indication of how the developmental and remedial programs will be affected and
- procedures for evaluation of the plan's effectiveness.

Although a district may develop a single plan to cover all schools, the above information should be available for each school and the implementation of the plan will be evaluated on a school-by-school basis.

Evaluation and Revision of the Basic Skills Improvement Plan

Basic skills improvement plans should cover a two-to-four-year period and be revised when formal or informal evaluations suggest that adjustments are necessary. Evaluations should include an analysis of the progress made toward the interim goals in basic skills, the attainment of the objectives in the plan, the unanticipated consequences of the plan, the reactions of students, teachers and parents to elements of the plan and, where appropriate, recommendations for revisions.

These evaluations should be conducted by a team of teaching staff members at the end of each school year. Evaluations will be most effective if they are conducted at the building level, but a common process and format should be used across the district.

The county offices' staff monitor to determine whether the evaluations are conducted and are adequate in scope and technique. They also monitor to ensure that revisions are made in the plan whenever needed and that both the evaluation results and the revisions are reported to the public.

Delivery of Remedial Services

Districts use state and local test results and other data to identify children in need of remediation and to diagnose their specific needs. County staff determine whether all eligible children have been served and whether the test data have been analyzed properly and made available to the appropriate teaching staff members. County staff also monitor the local remedial programs to ensure that all state and federal regulations are followed. The policy manual for programs using state compensatory education funds provides specific regulations and guidelines for these programs.

Evaluation of Remedial Programs

Remedial programs supported with either ESEA Title I or state compensatory education funds must be evaluated annually according to

guidelines issued by the department. The guidelines specify procedures for analyzing test data to estimate performance gains attributable to the remedial programs. The analysis must be done for each school. The guidelines also provide for the use of non-test data such as school attendance information and student attitudes toward school.

The evaluation reports prepared and submitted by the districts are reviewed by the department to determine if the evaluation has been properly conducted and whether programmatic changes should be considered. In the latter case, the district may be asked to review and revise its program plans for ESEA Title I and state compensatory education and its basic skills improvement plan.

Failure to conduct these evaluations, to follow state guidelines or to revise program plans where necessary may result in a request for a remedial plan and interim approval for the school or schools in question.

Analysis of MBS Test Results

Finally, the department analyzes the results of the MBS tests to determine whether a school needs a comprehensive program review directed by the department or whether the district should conduct its own review of the basic skills program.

The analysis of the MBS test results will be based on the following principles:

- New Jersey statutes are specific concerning the mastery of basic skills and uniform standards approved by the state board, that are applied to districts regardless of their geographic, social, or economic conditions.
- The analysis of the MBS test scores serves only as a triggering device and as a preliminary screening mechanism to determine whether a comprehensive program review should be conducted. The results of the comprehensive review determine whether a remedial plan is needed for the school. Therefore, the classification of a school in the basic skills area will not be a direct result of the analysis of the MBS results.
- Analyses are made separately for both communication and computation skills. Weaknesses in either area leads to a comprehensive program review.
- To obtain a reliable indicator of performance and to avoid reliance on the results of one year's achievement data, results from a three-year period are used to determine the level of performance in a school. The results for each year will be weighted by the number of students tested and a weighted average will be calculated for the three-year period. Then the three-year trend is determined using a test of statistical significance. (Appendix B)
- Exceptional situations sometimes occur due to small populations, reorganization or sudden changes within the district.

In such cases, additional evidence will be reviewed to determine whether a comprehensive program review is needed. (Appendix C).

- Districts are given an opportunity to provide evidence to change the conclusions drawn from the analysis. Two types of rebuttal are acceptable: evidence that significant basic skills gains have been made within the school or evidence that an acceptable improvement plan already is being implemented. (Appendix C)

Results of the MBS Analysis

Diagram II shows how the analysis of MBS performance in a school is used.

1. High performance over a three year period (blocks 1-3) exempts a school from a program review. However, where a generally high performing district or school is experiencing a significant decline in scores, a local review may be recommended by the county superintendent.

2. Schools with moderate MBS results over the three years will not have to revise their basic skills improvement plan if they achieve their interim goals (block 4). The absence of an improvement trend (block 5) may result in a state request that the district review and, if necessary revise, the school's basic skills improvement plan and program plans for ESEA

Diagram II

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS ON THE

MINIMUM BASIC SKILLS TEST

BY SCHOOL

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ABOVE STANDARD
DURING THREE-YEAR PERIOD

Three-Year Trend	HIGH (85% or above)	MODERATE (65% - 84%)	LOW (64% or below)
Improving	1	4	(7)
Stable	2	(5)	X 8
Declining	(3)	△ 6	X 9

IMPROVING - MET INTERIM GOAL

STABLE - NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

DECLINING - STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DROP

X - SUBJECT TO A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

O - MAY BE REQUESTED TO SUBMIT A REVISED BASIC SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

△ - WILL BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A REVISED BASIC SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

39

40

Title I and State Compensatory Education. If there is declining trend, a review will be required (block 6)

3. Low MBS results over the three-year period will result in a request for a comprehensive program review unless the school has reached its approved interim goals for the year (blocks 7-9). A comprehensive program review will lead to the development and submission of a revised basic skills improvement plan unless the review team finds adequate improvement activities already are underway. If the district submits a plan for the school which is approved by the commissioner of education, the school will be classified as interim-approved.

For a school classified as interim-approved in the basic skills, subsequent evaluations will be based upon the achievement of the approved interim goals and the implementation of the approved plan. If the school fails to meet its interim goals, the commissioner will review the school's classification status and, if necessary, exercise his corrective-action powers. Direct corrective actions include an order for budgetary changes, in-service training programs, or a recommendation to the state board to issue an administrative order specifying a remedial plan.

The Comprehensive Program Review

The purpose of a comprehensive program review of the basic skills program and related factors in a school is to provide an indepth diagnosis of problems contributing to inadequate achievement in the basic skills. The team conducting the comprehensive review makes recommendations to the district and school. These recommendations should help the district develop a remedial plan which has a high probability of improving basic skills performance over a three-year period.

Any school in which less than 65 percent of the tested students meet the state minimum standards on the MBS tests and in which the test results have remained stable or declined over a three-year period will undergo a comprehensive program review unless an acceptable rebuttal is submitted by the district. (Appendix C).

The comprehensive program review is designed to analyze the existing school program and practices in relationship to those factors identified through research as associated with successful achievement in basic skills. These factors include school policies and practices, staff knowledge and attitudes, methods of instruction, time-on-task and parent and community involvement. Therefore, the review team looks at

schoolwide policies and practices as well as the formal basic skills program. (See Appendix D for an outline of the factors examined in the comprehensive review.) The review team's instrument developed by the department focuses its attention on the significant factors.

Through this structured review process the district is provided with recommendations that have a high probability of improving performance in basic skills. After a comprehensive review is completed, however, it is the district's responsibility to develop an appropriate remedial plan which fits its needs and resources.

Procedures for Comprehensive Program Reviews

When comprehensive program reviews are needed, the county superintendent selects teams from a list developed by the commissioner. Team members will have a variety of backgrounds, but they will be selected because of their knowledge of schools and basic skills. The size of the teams and their composition will vary with the size of the school and the scope of the basic skills problems within the school.

Teams will spend approximately three days at a school interviewing staff, reviewing policies and materials and observing educational practices. Each district affected will be asked to appoint a local review team consisting of administrators, teachers and parents. This local team should work directly with the external review team and subsequently be actively involved in the revision of the basic skills improvement plan.

The external team will meet with the local review team at the end of the review visit to discuss findings and recommendations. A formal report will be sent to the district within 10 days of the visit.

A district is not obliged to follow the recommendations of the external team in preparing a plan. However, any alternate strategies proposed by the district must be supported by a strong rationale which indicates how the proposed strategies will lead to improvement in basic skills achievement.

Local Revisions of the Basic Skills Improvement Plan

In situations in which local revision of the basic skills improvement plan is recommended, the state will provide the district with the diagnostic instruments used in the comprehensive program review and district staff can be trained in the use of these materials by the Educational Improvement Centers (EICs). However, the district may use its own method of program review and revision. Any method which provides for a thorough examination of the basic skills program and the basic skills improvement plan by qualified personnel will be acceptable.

The purpose of any review is to ensure that the district's basic skills improvement efforts are focused on the most critical areas of need and that the district's resources are used efficiently to improve performance. If these ends can be achieved, there should be progress towards the larger goal of having all pupils achieve at least the state minimum standards in basic skills.

SUMMARY

- Only schools will be classified in the basic skills.

- Districts with students performing below the statewide minimum standards in the basic skills must submit a basic skills improvement plan for approval by the department. The plans must cover each affected school.

- Five broad elements are evaluated in the area of the basic skills:

  - the basic skills improvement plan, which must be approved and fully implemented,
  - the evaluation of basic skills' improvement plan and its revision where necessary,
  - the delivery of remedial services to all designated students,
  - the district's annual evaluation of a school's remedial programs,
  - a three-year analysis of the MBS test results will determine the need for a comprehensive program review.

- Schools must meet all five criteria to be approved for three years.

SECTION IV

THE EVALUATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH LAW AND REGULATION

The final area of evaluation, compliance with law and regulation, is broad in scope and, therefore, more complex. It encompasses district and school compliance with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations. State and federal regulations contain the specific criteria and standards for the evaluation of schools and districts in this area. These legal requirements typically determine how funds are to be expended, what program elements must be implemented and who must be served.

Compliance with these regulations is monitored by county staff. If areas of non-compliance or inadequacy are identified, program specialists from the department are sent to the district to conduct a Level II monitoring visit and to make recommendations to the district for the correction of any compliance problems. These recommendations are included in the annual monitoring report issued in June.

Not all legal mandates apply equally to districts and schools and, therefore, the criteria may vary according to the situation. For example, pupil transportation regulations set district requirements, while the state regulations for curriculum apply to both districts and schools.

Districts must provide programs and services required by law or regulation, but it is recognized that some programs may not be required

in all districts. For example, districts without bilingual pupils are not subject to bilingual program requirements.

However, if a district elects to offer a program such as an accredited evening high school, it must meet all program requirements, and the program is included in the evaluation and classification procedure.

The following program areas are included in the state review of compliance:

- adult education auxiliary services to non-public school pupils
- bilingual education
- child nutrition
- curriculum (except basic skills which is monitored as a separate category)
- equal educational opportunity (including affirmative action, and desegregation based upon race, sex, national origin)
- school facilities
- federal programs
  - ESEA Title I (monitored as part of basic skills)
  - migrant education (monitored as part of basic skills)
  - ESEA Title II
  - ESEA Title IVB, C
- pupil transportation
- secondary education
- special education

- staff evaluation
- state compensatory education (monitored as part of the basic skills)
- vocational technical education
- vocational technical safety

Criteria

In general, the criteria used to evaluate district or school compliance fall into four categories:

- provision of mandated services to all eligible students,
- appropriate use of local, state and federal funds,
- compliance with the approved program plan, if required, and
- compliance with all specific criteria contained in the applicable regulations and statutes.

Evaluation

Staff of the department check for compliance by districts and schools through a variety of activities including monitoring by county office staff (Level I) and monitoring by program specialists from the central office (Level II).

Monitoring activities may include interviews with the superintendent and others including teachers, supervisors, pupils and parents; visits to classrooms; review of reports, records and meeting agendas;

and examination of board of education minutes, planning documents, budgets, newsletters and other public notices and attendance at meetings. Only essential documents are copied for filing in the county or central offices of the department.

Areas of non-compliance are identified in the June 1 monitoring report or in special reports prepared by department categorical program staff. The district is then given a reasonable but specific time period in which to implement an improvement plan. If no action is taken by the district, or if local initiatives fail to correct the problem, the department will request a remedial plan from the district.

SUMMARY

- Both schools and districts are evaluated to determine their compliance with applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

- Compliance is checked through state monitoring and areas of noncompliance are reported in the annual monitoring report.

- The specific criteria used to make these evaluations are found in the statutes and regulations themselves.

SECTION V

CLASSIFICATION

Districts are classified in two areas: the educational plan and compliance with law and regulation. Schools are classified in three areas in 1980: the educational plan, basic skills and compliance with law and regulation. A fourth area for schools, progress toward local goals and objectives, will be added in 1981.

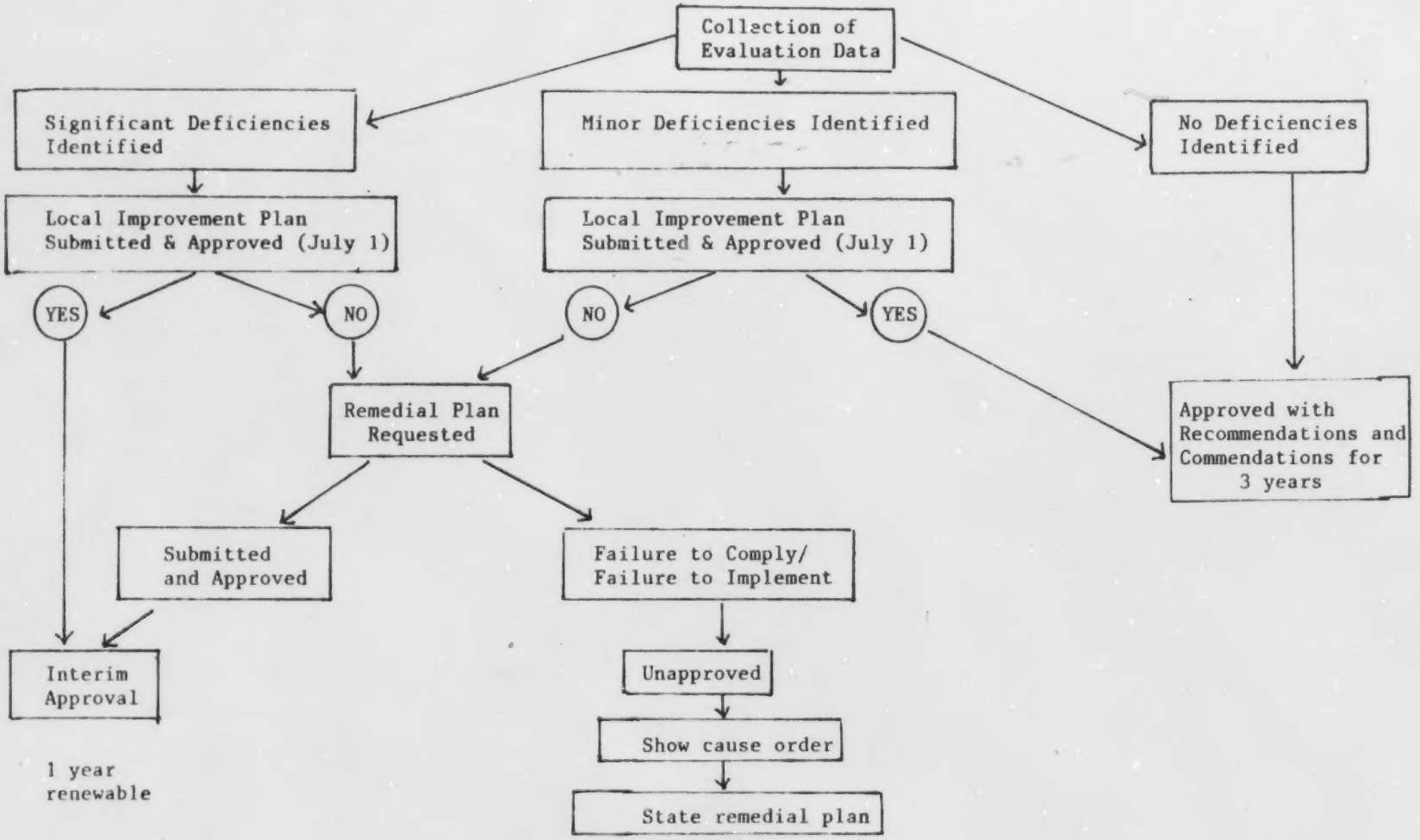
The classifications awarded to schools and districts in the areas evaluated are approved with recommendations and commendations, interim approval and unapproved.

Diagram III presents a general overview of the three classifications, their relationship to the evaluation findings and to one another. Even a cursory review should reveal that schools and districts are given ample opportunity to avoid classifications as unapproved. This is consistent with the overall philosophy underlying the evaluation and classification process which emphasizes local improvement efforts rather than state interventions or punitive measures.

There are two exceptions to the pattern outlined in Diagram III. First, if a serious deficiency is found in a mandated program area, the commissioner may delay approval of any local improvement plan and notification of classification until a Level II monitoring visit has been conducted (Section II for a description of Level II monitoring. Second,

DIAGRAM III

The Process of Classification



if the analysis of the MBS test results indicates that a comprehensive program review is needed, the commissioner will delay approval of the school's basic skills improvement plan and notification of classification until the report of the external team is submitted and the district has had an opportunity to revise its plan. Section II and IV contain descriptions of the comprehensive program review.

Approved With Recommendations And Commendations

The commissioner will recommend to the state board that a district or school be classified as approved with recommendations and commendations when:

- A school or district meets or surpasses the standards set by the department in the area being evaluated. Recommendations will refer to areas where continued progress is desirable and commendations to areas when substantial progress has been made. Approval is granted for three years.

or

- A school or district has minor deficiencies but initiates appropriate improvement activities prior to the classification decision and/or submits an acceptable plan to do so in its annual report. This local initiative will be monitored by the state. If the deficiency is not remediated in accordance with

the timelines in the corrective plan, the commissioner may seek to alter the classification status in order to attain a more effective plan.

In cases that fall into the second category, six general criteria are used to determine if a district or school can be approved:

- The district or school is making good faith efforts to improve its programs where necessary and to comply with law and regulation.
- The district or school can provide evidence of progress in the implementation of improvements and evidence of the effectiveness of the improvement in addressing the cited problems.
- The district or school is providing adequate services to all students and special services for all eligible students.
- The district or school has sound fiscal operations and uses funds pursuant to law and regulation.
- A school has 65 percent or more of the students tested above the statewide standards for basic skills or has met its interim goals for the basic skills.
- The school or district has no deficiencies which have a negative impact on instruction, equal educational opportunity, health and safety of pupils and staff.

Schools and districts satisfying the six criteria may be approved with recommendations and commendations. Failure to satisfy any one of these general criteria may result in a request for a remedial plan and a classification of interim approval.

Approval with recommendations and commendations is granted for three years and normally will not be changed in that time period. State monitoring will continue on a reduced schedule and problems or deficiencies that arise in an approved area during the three-year period will be reported to the district in the annual monitoring report. The district will be expected to correct such problems or the commissioner will issue a show cause order as to why he should not change the classification status.

Interim Approval

The commissioner will recommend to the state board that interim approval be granted for one year when:

- A school or district has significant deficiencies that in the judgment of the commissioner, have a negative impact upon the instructional program, equal educational opportunity, health and safety of pupils and teaching staff or sound fiscal operations and the district initiates an acceptable improvement effort prior to classification.

or

- A school or district has significant deficiencies that, in the judgment of the commissioner, have a negative impact upon the instructional program, equal educational opportunity, health

and safety of pupils and teaching staff or sound fiscal operations and the commissioner requests a remedial plan which is submitted and approved.

Interim approvals are granted for one year. They may be extended by the commissioner if a district or school makes satisfactory progress toward the agreed-upon objectives.

Interim Approval And Remedial Plans

If a school or district has one or more significant educational deficiencies - failure to involve citizens in goal development, failure of a significant percentage of students to reach state standard in basic skills or failure to provide mandated services to children - and the district has not initiated an acceptable improvement plan, the commissioner will use his statutory authority to direct the district to prepare a remedial plan (N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14). In the case of unsatisfactory basic skills performance, a comprehensive program review may be ordered prior to the request for a remedial plan.

If an adequate remedial plan is developed and adopted in a timely fashion, and the commissioner approves the remedial plan, the school or district will be granted interim approval. The state will monitor the implementation of the approved remedial plan. Remedial plans are discussed in more detail in Section VII.

When the objectives of an improvement plan or a remedial plan are attained and the deficiency is eliminated, interim approval will be changed to approved with recommendations and commendations. In such cases, the approval will be granted for the remainder of the original three-year time period dating from the initial notification of classification.

Unapproved

The commissioner will recommend to the state board that a school or district be classified as unapproved when one or more significant educational deficiencies exist and the local board of education fails to produce upon request an acceptable remedial plan or fails to implement an approved remedial plan.

The commissioner then will order the district to show cause why corrective action should not be taken pursuant to law and regulation. If, after such a hearing, the commissioner determines that corrective action is necessary, he may order budget changes and/or in-service programs.

If these actions are deemed to be insufficient to cope with the deficiency, the commissioner may recommend to the state board that it impose a specific remedial plan on the district which may include budget changes and other appropriate measures.

Appeal

A district has the same rights of petition and appeal for classification decisions as it has for all other administrative decisions of the commissioner. Information on the petition process can be obtained from the department's Bureau of Controversies and Disputes.

Delayed Notification Of Classification

Notification of classification can be delayed if:

- A remedial plan is requested by the commissioner for one or more areas. In such cases, the August 31 evaluation report shall indicate "Interim approval will be granted upon receipt and approval of a remedial plan."

or

- A comprehensive program review is being undertaken as a result of poor basic skills performance in a school. In such cases, the August 31 evaluation report shall indicate "Classification pending completion of a program review."

SUMMARY

- Schools are evaluated and classified in three areas in 1980:

  - development and implementation of an educational plan
  - performance in the basic skills and
  - compliance with law and regulation

- A fourth area, progress toward local goals and objectives, will be evaluated and classified in 1981.

- Districts are evaluated and classified in two areas:

  - development and implementation of an educational plan and
  - compliance with law and regulation

- The three classification categories are:

  - approved with recommendations and commendations (granted for three years)
  - interim approval (granted one year at a time)
  - unapproved

- Approved with recommendations and commendations means a school or district has substantially satisfied all of the criteria for the area in question and has no significant deficiencies.

- Interim approval means that the evaluation found significant deficiencies in a school or district in the area being evaluated, but a state-approved improvement plan is being implemented.

- Unapproved means a district has not met its obligation to implement an effective remedial plan and is, therefore, subject to state corrective action.

SECTION VI

REMEDIAL PLANS AND STATE CORRECTIVE ACTION

The purpose of the evaluation and classification process is to stimulate appropriate local initiatives to correct any deficiencies that prevent the provision of a thorough and efficient system of education for the children served by the school or district. One method used to ensure the effectiveness of these local efforts is state approval of a remedial plan. A second is state monitoring of their implementation and evaluation.

When a remedial plan is not submitted upon request, or is judged to be inadequate to correct the deficiencies, or fails to have the desired effects, the commissioner will initiate limited corrective actions through the show cause procedure or request more comprehensive action from the state board.

Remedial Plans

N.J.A.C. 6:8-6.2(i), (ii) defines the conditions under which a remedial plan is required and the responsibility for development of the plan. This section states:

> A remedial plan shall be requested for a district or a school when the specified criteria have not been met and no effective corrective action has been implemented by the district.
>
> i. The local board of education shall be responsible for developing and implementing such remedial plans;

ii. A school or district shall be granted interim approval when a requested remedial plan is approved by the commissioner and implemented by the district.

Identification of significant deficiencies leads to the requirement that a written remedial plan be submitted to the commissioner for approval. If the plan is approved, the commissioner shall assure its implementation in a timely manner.

According to N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1(a), remedial plans must include, but need not be limited to:

- an analysis of the need and its causes,
- a description and justification for the improvement strategies,
- interim goals and benchmarks to assess the progress of the remedial plan and a plan for the evaluation of its effectiveness,
- procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan,
- an implementation timeline and schedule and
- specifics about the fiscal and staff resources to be used to implement the plan.

A remedial plan, when approved, is an agreement between the district and the commissioner. A remedial plan cites the specific actions to be taken by the district and school, and provides a basis for the department and local citizens to judge the progress being made.

Districts are expected to make optimal use of local, state and federal funds to support implementation of remedial plans.

Public Involvement in Remedial Plans

To be consistent with the overall philosophy of citizen participation in the T&E process, the state board included in the evaluation and classification regulations a requirement for public involvement in the "evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan" (N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1(a)4).

Citizen participation is important at both the initiation and completion of the evaluation because a good evaluation addresses those questions that are of prime concern to the community. At the start, community members should be given an opportunity to review the proposed evaluation plan to ensure that their concerns are addressed. Their questions may include:

- Does the proposed evaluation address all the objectives of the remedial plan?
- Is information being collected from all affected parties--teaching staff members, students, parents and citizens?
- Will the evaluation address community concerns that have been raised about the remedial plan?
- Are the planned reports timely and will they be understood by the public?

- Are available resources being used efficiently to support the remedial plan?

The above questions illustrate the kinds of useful advice which citizens can provide about the evaluation design. The primary purpose of community participation at this point is to ensure that the community's concerns are fully addressed in the evaluation design.

A second opportunity for citizen involvement in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan is the review of the evaluation report prior to its completion. In this phase, a group of parents and community members might review the adequacy of the report itself and ask questions such as:

- Are the conclusions supported by the evidence?
- Is all pertinent evidence included in the report?
- Have all the objectives and concerns originally included in the evaluation plan been addressed?
- Is the interpretation of the data adequate?
- Are recommendations for changes made where they appear to be needed?

Several approaches which would satisfy the code, are open to the district seeking to involve parents and citizens in reviewing evaluation plans and evaluation reports. For example, evaluation committees, composed of district personnel and citizens, could be constituted; existing groups such as PTAs, T&E Committees, Bilingual or Title I

Advisory Councils could be used as reviewers; a district might choose to hold special school or district community meetings to provide for this participation; or reactions and recommendations could be obtained by direct mailings to the homes of parents and taxpayers.

State Corrective Action

Two types of corrective actions may be initiated by the commissioner if the remedial plan process fails to produce the desired results, a remedial plan prepared by the commissioner or an administrative order by the state board. Both corrective actions are preceded by a show cause order issued by the commissioner.

N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.2 defines the authority of the commissioner as follows:

> (a) If the commissioner finds that the remedial plan submitted by the district board of education is insufficient or if a plan approved by the commissioner is not implemented in a timely and effective manner, the district board of education shall be ordered, by the commissioner, to show cause why corrective action should not be taken, pursuant to law and regulation.
>
> (b) If the commissioner of education, after a plenary hearing, determines that it is necessary to take corrective action the commissioner may:
>
> 1. Order necessary budgetary changes within the school district and/or
> 2. Order in-service training programs for teaching staff members and other personnel.
>
> (c) If the commissioner determines such corrective actions are insufficient, the commissioner shall recommend to the state board that it take appropriate action."

N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.3 defines the authority of the state board as follows:

> "(a) The State Board of Education, in determining that the school or school district is not providing a thorough and efficient system of free public schools as defined in law and regulation, shall issue an administrative order specifying a remedial plan to the district board of education. This plan may include budgetary changes and/or other measures the state board determines to be appropriate. Nothing therein shall limit the right of any party to appeal the administrative order to the Superior Court, pursuant to law."

The district shall report on the progress made in implementing a remedial plan according to an agreed upon schedule. This implementation will be monitored by the county office.

Under this system, the annual report submitted each year by districts on July 1 will contain a full report on the progress and the effectiveness of remedial plans. The extension of an interim approval in any area is dependent upon presentation of evidence that interim goals and benchmarks have been achieved or that the progress made is educationally significant in light of extenuating circumstances.

SUMMARY

- Remedial plans are requested by the department when the improvement efforts initiated by the district are ineffective or inadequate.

- Local boards of education are responsible for the development and implementation of remedial plans.

- Failure to submit an adequate plan or to implement an approved plan may result in action by the commissioner and state board to impose a plan on the district.

SECTION VII

TIMELINE: 1980-81

Completion Date	Activity
June 1, 1980	Annual Monitoring Reports will be provided to each district by the county superintendent. The reports will identify areas of progress and areas of need for both the district and for individual schools within the district. An improvement plan must be included in the July 1, 1980 Annual Report for each need identified in the monitoring report.
June 1, 1980	The department will provide MBS test data to local school districts.
July 1, 1980	Districts will submit their Annual Reports to the county superintendents for the commissioner. This report will be reviewed by county staff to determine if all identified needs are being adequately addressed. After this review, the county superintendent will recommend the classifications for each district and school therein to the commissioner of education.

Completion Date	Activity
July 15, 1980	Trend data for the MBS test will be provided by the department to the county offices for distribution to districts. The county superintendent will notify districts concerning schools subject to a comprehensive program review. Districts will be given until August 15 to submit evidence to rebutt this analysis.
August 15, 1980	Rebuttal information due in county offices.
August 31, 1980	The commissioner will notify each chief school administrator and board president of the recommended classifications for their district and the schools therein and whether remedial plans are required.
September 3, 1980	The commissioner will recommend the classifications of districts and schools to the state board.
September 15, 1980	Comprehensive program reviews will begin in identified schools.

Completion Date	Activity
November 15, 1980	Remedial plans requested on August 31 must be submitted by November 15. Upon review and approval of the remedial plan, districts and schools will be classified and granted interim approval by the commissioner who will advise the state board of his actions in December.
December 1, 1980	All comprehensive program reviews will be completed.
December 10, 1980	The findings of the comprehensive review teams will be submitted to the districts and county superintendents no later than December 10. In these cases, districts will be given until January 15, 1981, to submit remedial plans.
January 15, 1981	All district budgets must be submitted for review by the county superintendent. Districts which received comprehensive program review team reports also will submit remedial plans no later than January 15, 1981, responding to recommendations of those reports.
March, 1981	Budgets are approved by the county superintendent and advertised by districts.

Completion Date	Activity
April, 1981	School elections are held.
June 1, 1981	Monitoring reports will be provided to each school and district by county superintendents. Monitoring reports for 1980-81 will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of local improvement plans or state-approved remedial plan(s). The reports, with the district's findings and other state program reports, will be used by districts and schools as the basis for a response in the districts' annual reports due July 1, 1981. Districts will submit all annual reports to the county superintendents.
July 1, 1981	The reports for districts/schools that received three-year approval in 1980 must include assurance of continued compliance in approved categories, and plans for correction of any deficiencies identified during the 1980-81 school year. Failure to provide such assurances and plans may result in action to change the classification. The 1981 annual report for those districts and schools given

interim approval in an area in 1980 must include evidence of progress toward remediation of deficiencies through implementation of the approved improvement activities. The annual report may include a request for extension of interim approval or for classification as approved.

SECTION VIII

RESOURCES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The administrative code for classification requires the commissioner to provide all available technical assistance to districts developing and implementing remedial plans at the request of the state (N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1(b)). The same section of the code states that such districts shall be given priority in allocation of discretionary fiscal resources and in access to department personnel.

There are 10 major sources of external assistance available to school districts that are required to develop and implement remedial plans. Four are administered directly by the department. The 10 are:

- problem-solving and development programs such as ESEA Title IV, compensatory education research and development, and vocational education research and development funds. The total amount of funds distributed by the programs in FY'80 was approximately $15 million. While state and federal regulations often prohibit targeting such program funds to any special group of districts, the department may direct its requests for proposals (RFP's) to the most critical problems. Districts that can support their needs statements with a state evaluation report should be especially competitive in the allocation of such grants.

- state and federal categorical aid programs such as ESEA Title I, state compensatory education, vocational education and special education. These programs permit funds to be used for in-service training of local personnel. While regulations place limits on the use of the funds, there is sufficient flexibility to permit a district to use them as part of an overall improvement effort especially in the basic skills.

- the National Diffusion Network (NDN) which provides assistance directly to districts and schools wishing to adopt or adapt programs validated as educationally effective. The services are available free or at minimal cost to the district. Information on available programs and services are available from county staff, the Educational Improvement Centers and the ESEA Title IV Office.

- the professional staff of the department who are available to provide technical assistance for categorical programs, facilities planning, budgeting, evaluation and other areas. Both county and central office staff will be available to assist districts upon request.

- the four EICs whose annual plans are based upon the needs of their regions including needs identified through the state evaluation of schools and districts. The EICs can provide schools and districts with a wide range of services and are able to assist in program diagnosis, remedial planning, implementation of remedial plans, in-service education and evaluation.

- the faculty of the public and private institutions of higher education who have experience and knowledge needed by schools and districts. While there is no formal mechanism to tap this resource, districts are encouraged to seek such assistance. The department will act as a broker for such requests and will work with the public and private colleges to extend their assistance to the public schools.

- Research for Better Schools (RBS) which provides services in many aspects of educational improvement. RBS is the federally funded regional laboratory serving New Jersey and is located in Philadelphia.

- other New Jersey school districts or schools which have effectively addressed similar problems. The county offices or EICs will assist districts in the identification of such sites.

- community resources such as volunteers, tutors and experts from local businesses or institutions.

- the ESEA Title I Technical Assistance Center at Educational Testing Service in Princeton which can provide technical assistance to districts for evaluation or program improvement efforts that include Title I.

Only four of the sources of assistance - R&D funds, in-service funds, department staff and the NDN program - are administered by the department. These resources will be targeted to schools to the degree that statute and regulation permit. The department also will use its supervisory authority over the EICs to ensure that districts with remedial plans are given the highest priority.

These state, regional and federal resources can be of enormous assistance in the development and implementation of improvement programs. However a district's own resources are significant.

Districts must identify, motivate and unfetter the creative talents of local teaching staff members because it is individuals working in the schools who will determine the success or failure of improvement efforts.

The quality of the teaching staff may be far more important than the amount of technical assistance or external funding received. To this end, the department will place increased emphasis upon the improvement and expansion of in-service education in the next few years. Particular attention will be given to development of leadership and instructional management skills.

SUMMARY

- The commissioner will direct all available technical assistance to districts developing and implementing remedial plans.

- Districts with remedial plans will be given priority in competition for state-administered research and development funds and allocation of state personnel.

- The state will work with external organizations such as the colleges and Research for Better Schools to ensure that optimal use is made of their resources.

- Since districts ultimately must depend upon their own staff to implement improvement efforts, the state will place a high priority upon in-service education.

SECTION IX

EVALUATION AND CLASSIFICATION IN 1981

The evaluation and classification process for 1981 will differ from the process used in 1980 in three respects. First, districts and schools that have been approved in an area will not be classified in that area again until 1983. Second, districts and schools granted interim approval for an area will be evaluated according to their implementation of the approved improvement plan and progress toward the improvement objectives. These districts and schools may be granted an extension of their interim approvals or reclassified based upon the results observed and reported. The third difference in 1981 will be the evaluation and classification of all schools according to their progress towards in achieving of local goals, objectives and standards.

A New Area of Evaluation: Local Goals and Objectives

The Public School Education Act of 1975 and the administrative code set forth an accountability and improvement process that requires local districts to set goals, objectives and standards for the district and for each school. At least once every five years, districts should evaluate their progress toward these goals and objectives and use the evaluation results to guide improvement efforts where needed.

Significant variations in progress toward particular goals or objectives are likely to occur among schools. Goals and objectives may even differ among schools within a district. Schools, therefore, will

be classified in this area of evaluation. Districts, which are responsible for conducting the evaluations, will be held accountable for improvement plans where needed.

It is expected that each school will evaluate its progress toward two or three goals other than basic-skills goals each year. If all schools or a group of schools in a district share the same goals and objectives, a common evaluation process may be conducted, but the results must be reported school-by-school.

Criteria for Evaluation and Classification

The department will monitor the evaluations, review the procedures and methods employed, check to see that timely public reporting occurs and ensure that improvement activities are initiated where needed.

To determine the classification of a school, the department will review local evaluation activities to determine whether:

- school goals are clearly related to district and state goals,
- school goals, objectives and standards and programs have been developed and reported to the community,
- locally selected evaluation procedures implemented by teaching staff are valid and reliable,

- the school meets the locally determined standard or an appropriate improvement activity has been initiated by the district and the school,
- results of pupil achievement of school objectives and standards are reported in a format which is understandable to the public, have been reported to the public and are filed at the school and district offices and
- in cases where the standard is not met in the first year of evaluation, that subsequent evaluations show that the school is making progress towards the goals and objectives.

The department is concerned about the level of achievement, e.g., the amount of progress being made towards the attainment of local goals, objectives and standards. When there is inadequate evidence of progress, the department will ask for a local improvement effort to be initiated and require an annual evaluation of progress in that goal area by the district. If these efforts fail to stimulate improvement, the state will assist the district in developing a remedial plan for the goals and objectives in question.

If the evidence available to the department indicates these criteria are substantially met by a school, it will be classified as approved with recommendations and commendations. If the criteria are not met, the principles set forth in Section VI will apply.

SUMMARY

- Schools will be evaluated and classified in 1981 according to their progress in achieving local goals, objectives and standards.

- Schools are expected to evaluate their progress toward two or three goals each year in adddition to their evaluation of basic skills. This process must begin in the 1980-81 school year.

- The department will review the adequacy of the evaluations, the use of the results and the reporting to the public pursuant to law and regulation. If these criteria are met, the school will be approved with recommendations and commendations.

- If the evaluation show a lack of progress, the department will ask for a local improvement plan for that goal area and require annual evaluation of progress. In time, approval will be granted until there is evidence of progress toward the goal.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

NEW JERSEY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

TITLE 6

EDUCATION

SUBTITLE B. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER 8. THOROUGH AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AUTHORITY: N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:7A-1 et seq.

6:8-1.1 Words and phrases defined

"Classification" means a procedure through which the progress of each school and district toward local goals, objectives, and standards, development and implementation of an educational plan, achievement of statewide standards in the basic skills, and compliance with law and regulation are evaluated and a determination is made whether or not corrective action is needed.

6:8-6.2 Evaluation and classification

(a) The commissioner shall evaluate the status of each school in the development and implementation of an educational plan; progress toward the achievement of local goals, objectives and standards; progress toward the achievement of state and local goals, objectives and standards for pupil proficiency in basic communication and computational skills; and compliance with other law and regulation.

(b) The commissioner also shall evaluate the status of each district in regard to the development and implementation of an educational plan and compliance with relevant law and regulation.

(c) The evaluation of schools and districts shall be based upon the results of annual monitoring, analysis of reports submitted by the district, the results of annual testing for achievement in the basic skills areas, and visitations by representatives of the commissioner.

(d) An evaluation report on each district, including each school within the district, shall be prepared by the commissioner and submitted to each district board of education and chief school administrator no later than August 31 of each year.

(e) The evaluation report for each district and school shall contain the following elements:

1. A summary of significant areas of progress toward meeting the standards of subchapters 3 and 4 of this Chapter, if applicable;

2. Recommendations for improvement in each of the following areas that are applicable based upon the analysis of data:

i. Development and implementation of the educational plan in accordance with the provisions of subchapters 3 and 4 of this Chapter;

ii. Progress in meeting local goals, objectives and standards (this area will not be evaluated until July 1981, and shall be implemented according to procedures developed by the commissioner and approved by the State Board of Education);

iii. Compliance with law and regulation;

iv. Adequate progress in pupil achievement of minimum basic skills.

3. Specifications concerning the required areas for improvement, including, but not limited to, a description of the problem areas to be addressed in a plan or through other specified actions and the proposed timelines for submission of a remedial plan, if required.

(f) The results of the state minimum basic skills tests shall be used to determine whether or not a school shall undergo a comprehensive program review. These test results shall establish a rebuttable presumption about the adequacy of the basic skills program. The district shall be given the opportunity to offer additional evidence of pupil achievement prior to the decision to conduct a comprehensive program review. The commissioner shall establish guidelines which shall specify the procedures by which the additional evidence of pupil achievement shall be used.

1. The analysis of the results of the state minimum basic skills test for this purpose shall be conducted by the commissioner, utilizing criteria and standards approved by the State Board of Education;

2. The commissioner may delay submission of the evaluation report for a school when a comprehensive program review is required. The results of this review shall be incorporated into the evaluation report.

(g) Based upon this evaluation, the commissioner shall recommend to the State Board of Education, a separate classification in each of four areas for each school, and a separate classification in each of two areas for each district.

1. Approval with recommendations and commendations shall be granted for 3 years when:

i. The development and implementation of the educational plan in a district or school is proceeding in accordance with the provisions of subchapters 3 and 4 of this Chapter;

ii. A school, in the judgment of the commissioner, has made sufficient progress toward the achievement of local goals, objectives and standards. This criterion shall take effect in July 1981 and shall be implemented according to procedures developed by the commissioner and approved by the State Board of Education;

iii. A school is providing an effective basic skills program, statewide standards in basic skills have been substantially achieved in the judgment of the commissioner and effective remedial programs are being provided for all pupils in need in the school;

iv. A district or school is substantially in compliance with all other laws and regulations.

2. Interim approval shall be granted when:

i. A district or school fails to satisfy one or more of the criteria in paragraph 1 of this subsection, but has initiated a corrective action which, in the judgment of the commissioner, constitutes an appropriate remedy; and

ii. The district or school defines clear interim goals for the corrective action acceptable to the Commissioner of Education. Interim approval will be granted for one year. Extension of interim approval for a second year or more may be granted at the discretion of the commissioner. Extension of interim approval shall depend upon the presentation of clear and convincing evidence that the agreed upon interim goals have been met.

iii. Correction of the deficiencies shall result in approval of the school or district in the specific area of classification.

3. A district shall be classified as unapproved and subject to a state administrative order when:

i. A remedial plan for the district or a school(s) within the district is requested by the commissioner but the district fails to submit a plan;

ii. A remedial plan for the district or a school(s) within the district is requested by the commissioner but the district does not submit an approvable plan;

iii. A remedial plan for the district or a school(s) within the district is requested, submitted and approved, but not fully implemented by the district.

(h) Nothing in subsection (g) shall be construed to limit the authority of the commissioner and State Board of Education to conduct the annual evaluation of schools and districts in accordance with law and regulation or to limit their authority to enforce compliance with all law and regulation.

(i A remedial plan shall be requested for a district or a school when the specified criteria have not been met and no effective corrective action has been implemented by the district.

1. The local board of education shall be responsible for developing and implementing such remedial plans.

2. A school or district shall be granted interim approval when a requested remedial plan is approved by the commissioner and implemented by the district.

(j) The evaluation and classification of districts and schools shall be implemented in accordance with a timetable approved by the State Board of Education and shall permit district boards of education to make budgetary provision for the achievement of goals, objectives and standards, and the remediation of deficiencies identified in the annual evaluation and/or educational plan.

(k) The commissioner shall notify annually the chief school administrator and the district board of education in writing of district and school evaluations and classifications.

(l) The evaluations and classifications of every district including each school shall be reported to the public by the district board of education, and evaluation reports and classification lists shall be maintained in the office of the county superintendent of schools and be available to the public.

(m) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the commissioner and State Board of Education to invoke corrective action in accordance with law and regulation.

6:8-7.1 Requirements for remedial plan

(a) Approvable remedial plans shall include the following elements:

1. An analysis of the need and its causes;

2. A description of and justification for the improvement strategies selected;

3. Interim goals to assess the progress of the remedial plan and a plan for the evaluation of its effectiveness;

4. Procedures to ensure public involvement in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the remedial plan;

5. An implementation timeline and schedule;

6. Specifics about the fiscal and staff resources to be used to implement the plan.

(b) The commissioner shall provide all available technical assistance to districts developing and implementing corrective actions. These districts shall be given priority in the allocation of discretionary fiscal resources and in access to personnel of the Department of Education.

Executive Order No. 66, 1978, Expiration Date.

This Chapter shall expire on August 1, 1984.

(Expiration date for Chapter 8 has already been adopted.)

APPENDIX B

PROCEDURES FOR CALCULATING THREE-YEAR ACHIEVEMENT AND INTERIM GOALS

I. Reading and math figures must be computed separately.

II. To compute three-year achievement level for each school:

A. Add the number of pupils meeting the standard in the tested grades for each year. You will get one figure for 1978, one for 1979 and one for 1980.

B. Add the number of pupils who were administered the test in the tested grades for each year. Again, you will get one figure for 1978, one for 1979 and one for 1980.

(Note: These figures exclude limited-English and special education pupils).

C. Add the three figures determined in IIA. This result represents the total number of pupils in the school who met the standard during the three-year period.

D. Add the three figures determined in IIB. This result represents the total number of pupils tested during the three-year period.

E. Divide the figure obtained in IIC by the figure obtained in IID. Multiply that result by 100. This figure represents the three year achievement level stated as a percent.

Example: In school Alpha, the following numbers of pupils were tested and met the standard in reading (this is a K-8 school):

	1978		1979		1980	
Grade	Tested	Met Standard	Tested	Met Standard	Tested	Met Standard
3	155	140	150	145	160	140
6	100	75	110	80	110	85

1. Adding the number tested and the number meeting the standard each year, we find the following:

	1978	1979	1980	
Number Tested	255	260	270	(from instruction IIB)
Number Meeting the Standard	215	225	225	(from instruction IIA)

2. The total tested during the three-year period was 255 + 260 + 270 = 785 (from IID).

3. The total meeting the standard during the three-year period was 215 + 225 + 225 = 665 (from IIC).

4. From IIE,
   Achievement level = 665/785 = .847 X 100 =84.7%

III. To determine the interim goal (significant improvement) and a significant decline

A. Determine the proportion meeting the standard in 1978 (the number is between 0.00 and 1.00; it is not a percent).

B. Determine the proportion not meeting the standard in 1978 (the number is between 0.00 and 1.00; it is not a percent).

C. Determine the total number tested in 1978.

D. Compute the following:

1. Multiply (IIIA X IIIB).

2. Divide that result by IIIC.

3. Determine the square root of that result.

4. Multiply that figure by 1.96.

   (Note: The number 1.96 represents the 95 percent confidence level).

E. Add the result in III D4 to IIIA and multiply by 100. That is the interim goal, and represents a significant improvement.

F. Subtract the result in III D4 from IIIA and multiply by 100. This represents a significant decline.

EXAMPLE: Using the previous example:

1. In 1978, 255 pupils were administered the test and 215 met the standard. Therefore 215/255 = .843 met the standard.

2. If .843 of the students met the standard, then 1 - .843 = .157 did not meet the standard.

3. Following IIID:

   1. .843 X .157 = .132
   2. .132/255 = .000518
   3. square root of .000518 = .023
   4. 1.96 X .023 = .045

5. .843 + .045 = .888 X 100 = 88.8%
6. .843 - .045 = .798 X 100 = 79.8%

4. Therefore if the percent meeting the standard in 1980 is greater than 88.8%, the trend is improving. If it is less than 79.8%, the trend is declining.

5. Since in 1980, 225/270 = .833 X 100 = 83.3% met the standard, the trend is neither improving nor declining; therefore, the trend is stable.

APPENDIX C

GUIDELINES FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS OF BASIC SKILLS PERFORMANCE

The following evidence may be presented to question the presumptions about the adequacy of the basic skills program derived from the analysis of the Minimum Basic Skills test results.

1. Eighty-five percent of pupils still enrolled who did not meet the statewide minimum standard on a previous MBS test have met that standard on the most recent MBS test. (For school year 1979-80 students administered the eleventh grade MBS tests took the ninth grade test in 1977-78. All students administered an MBS test during 1980-81 will have taken a previous MBS test.)

2. Educationally significant gains were made by pupils enrolled in remedial programs in every grade during the present year. A gain is defined as an improvement in performance level between mean pre test and mean post test scores consistent with the E.S.E.A. Title I evaluation guidelines. Districts can use this only to rebut the trend of data suggested by the MBS (i.e., improving, stable or declining), not the level of achievement (i.e., high, medium or low).

3. Through the validation process (N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.2(b)) the district can conclusively document (based on procedures outlined in N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.4) that significantly fewer students are in need of remediation in grades three, six, nine and eleven than indicated by the results of the MBS test during each year of the three-year period. This documentation must be provided for each pupil.

4. The categorization in "high," "moderate" or "low" achievement may be altered if the total number of students tested during the three-year period was less than thirty or there exists documented evidence that an historical event (e.g., teacher strike, flu epidemic, etc.) adversely affected the students' performance. In the first case the MBS test results shall not be considered when determining the classification of the school. In the second case, the results for the atypical year shall be excluded and the categorization recomputed based on the remaining two year's figures. If, by excluding the results of an atypical year, the total number tested during the two-year period is less than thirty then the MBS results shall not apply.

5. The categorization of "improving," "stable" or "declining" may be rebuted using the same criteria as in No. 4 above.

6. A new basic skills program has been implemented in the school within the past year.

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In schools in which there is no administration of the MBS tests, such as schools serving grades K-2 or 7-8, the following procedures will be used to determine whether a comprehensive program review is warranted:

1. The county superintendent may review the MBS test results from a contigious grade to ascertain the performance of students who attended the school the previous year. For example, a K-2 school might be reviewed through the examination of third grade test results of pupils who previously attended that school. Schools serving grades 7-8 might be reviewed in similar fashion by examination of 9th grade MBS results.

   This procedure is most easily used in situations where students move from one school to the next as a group and where they constitute all or a large portion of the enrollment in the next grade in the new school. This is the preferred procedure and should be used where records permit or the data is easily attained.

2. The alternative to be used when the above procedure cannot be followed is for the county office to review local assessment data required by N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.4 with particular attention to uniform district-wide measures. The Division of Operation, Research and Evaluation will provide the standards to be used in the review and will assist county offices upon request.

Factors that would mitigate the use of the Minimum Basic Skills test results for the classification of schools are:

1. Small student enrollment (total tested over the three-year period was less than thirty)

   In this situation, any one student can cause the percent pass ratio to fluctuate by three to six percentage points. The results, therefore, would be susceptible to random fluctuations in performance. This is not true in large schools where each student only contributes in a small way to the results for the school as a whole. Schools with an enrollment of less than thirty pupils in the tested grade(s) during the three year period must be evaluated with consideration for the small enrollment. The criteria are still applicable but the attainment of the interim goal must be judged in light of peculiarities of the specific situation. In general, a school or district with twenty to thirty students must be evaluated on test scores and supplemental judgments. If there are nineteen or fewer pupils, judgment must be strongly weighted.

2. Historical event

   Certain events occurring during or near the testing period could have an impact on the performance of the students within the school. Such things as natural disasters, teacher strikes, construction in building, tragedy within a school

district or change in administration can cause the results of the testing to be invalidated. Other long-range events such as flu epidemics can affect performance because absentee rates of students and teachers could cause deficits in learning.

3. New schools

A school which has just opened will not be evaluated using the MBS tests until the school has been in operation for at least three years.

4. Reorganization

Either internal reorganization within the school or changes within the district (i.e., local to receiving) during a particular year could interfere with the validity of the MBS results.

5. Shared-time vocationals

For vocational schools which do not offer reading and mathematics courses and whose students do not take the MBS, the basic skills area of evaluation would not be applicable.

6. Special purpose schools

Schools for special education, etc. would not be evaluated and classified in this area unless they administer the MBS. Equivalent evaluation procedures exist in the categorical program requirements.

APPENDIX D

LIST OF FACTORS USED TO GUIDE THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW

The factors used in the guidelines for the comprehensive program review teams were derived from research showing relationships between the alterable aspects of a school's program and student performance in the basic skills. Literally hundreds of research studies describing dozens of different factors have been reported in the research literature. Synthesizing these studies for use in this process was difficult because researchers use different labels to describe the same (or very similar) factors. Moreover, the research results in some areas are contradictory or inclusive. The materials, therefore, include only those factors and variables reported in the literature for which there appears to be consistent support. A bibliography of the research literature that was used to determine factors is at the end of this Appendix.

In addition to research support, the educational utility of the factors was considered in the selection process. That is, a second major criterion for including a factor was the utility of the concept for helping schools improve their educational programs. Educational utility is defined as consisting of three essential features: 1) reviewers and educators in the local school situation can understand the description of the factor and relate it to an aspect of the local educational program; 2) they can analyze programs in terms of the factor and suggest possible avenues for improvement; and 3) such improvements should logically lead to increased student performance in the basic skills. Pilot tests were conducted to insure the educational utility of these factors and their associated questions.

The comprehensive program review process involves the examination of these factors in a school through interviews with school staff, parents and students and analysis of relevant documents. The judgment of the reviewer obviously plays an important role in the review process. The process is designed to focus the reviewer's attention on specific aspects of the school's program that may need to be improved in order to increase student performance in the basic skills. The reviewer decides which methods to use to collect relevant information and uses professional judgment in reaching conclusions and making recommendations.

In the final analysis, considerable care should be taken to avoid overemphasis on the importance of any single weakness discovered in the school's program. Even schools with superior basic skills programs may find room for improvement in one area or another. Furthermore, a piecemeal effort to strengthen a particular problem area may have little or no effect on student learning. Significant improvements are more likely to result from a school-wide effort to strengthen the educational program in a number of areas.

The factors which have been identified as affecting student learning in basic skills are:

A. District Policies and School Management Priorities

1. Basic Skills Policies - The district has well-defined policies in basic skills, the school has clearly stated improvement objectives, and there is evidence of school-wide commitment to improving basic skills instruction.

2. Discipline Policies - The school has a discipline code approved by the board of education with clear standards for behavior; it is communicated to all members of the school community; it is enforced by the school staff, and it is viewed as fair and consistently applied in all cases.

3. Staff Development Procedures - The school administration has a strong commitment to improving the skills of the staff; staff development programs are planned and conducted in collaboration with the teaching staff, and in-service training programs are evaluated and revised over time.

4. Decision-Making Procedures - The school has formulated procedures for decision-making with reference to basic skills instruction and decision-making procedures are established within the school (e.g., curriculum planning committees).

B. Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Expectations

1. Teacher Knowledge of Instructional Content - The staff is knowledgeable about the structure and substance of the reading and math content they are responsible for teaching.

2. Staff Attitudes Toward the Basic Skills Program - The staff agrees with the overall priority placed on basic skills instruction, the goals of the program and the content and methods used.

3. Principals' Attitudes Toward their Role - Principals place high priority on the role of instructional leadership and play an active professional role in the basic skills programs of the school.

4. Staff Expectations About Student Learning - Administrators and teachers believe all students are capable of mastering the basic skills, avoid the use of negative labels for students and use positive techniques (e.g., rewards and praise) to motivate students to learn.

C. The Basic Skills Program

1. The instructional program includes:

   - definition of expected outcomes
   - referenced instruction/materials
   - criterion-referenced assessment
   - district, school and classroom student record keeping systems based on defined outcomes

2. Instructional management includes:

   - classroom-teacher-managed instruction
   - strong direct leadership by teachers
   - flexible grouping of students
   - positive methods of control
   - in-class compensatory education
   - lack of classroom disruption

D. Instructional Time

1. Time in Basic Skills Instruction - The school allocates sufficient instructional time to the teaching of reading and math and, when necessary, increases this time to provide for additional instruction.

2. Classroom Instructional Time - Teachers use the time allocated to the teaching of reading and math by applying effective strategies for organizing and managing the learning environment.

3. Student Engaged Time - In reading and math instruction, students spend a high proportion of their scheduled time actively engaged in academic work.

E. Parent and Community Relations

1. Parent and Community Relations and the Basic Skills Program - The school communicates with parents and community members about the basic skills program (e.g., student expectations, content of instruction, evaluation, reporting system) and, in addition, encourages parents to communicate with the school and become involved with the instructional program.

2. Parent and Community Relations and the Non-Instructional Processes - The administration and teachers communicate with the parents and community regarding school policies and practices and they encourage active participation of parents for the purpose of providing a safe, pleasant and effective learning environment.

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APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY

Classification categories

a. Approved with recommendations and commendations means that the school or district is free of any deficiencies in the area of evaluation that have or may have, in the judgment of the commissioner, a negative impact upon the instructional program, equal educational opportunity, the health and safety of pupils or school personnel or sound fiscal operations.

b. Interim Approval Pending means that the school or district has deficiencies in the area of evaluation that have or may have, in the judgment of the commissioner, a negative impact upon the instructional program, equal educational opportunity, the health and safety of pupils or school personnel or sound fiscal operations. A remedial plan must be submitted by the district to the commissioner and approved before interim approval is granted.

c. Interim Approval means that the school or district is implementing an approved remedial plan to correct deficiencies in the area of evaluation identified through the state's evaluation. A district/school is eligible for approval upon implementation of the remedial plan and correction of the deficiency.

d. Unapproved means that the area of evaluation has deficiencies that have or may have, in the judgment of the commissioner, a negative impact upon the instructional program, equal educational opportunity, the health and safety of pupils or school personnel or sound fiscal operations and the district or school fails to submit a plan, or a plan approved by the commissioner is not implemented in a timely and effective manner. The status of Unapproved leads to a show cause order.

Basic skills improvement plan refers to a written plan, prepared by the district or school to ensure that progress is made toward the goal of all pupils achieving at least the statewide standards in the basic skills.

The plan must encompass both the developmental and remedial programs. The intent of the plan is to improve the developmental program in order to reduce the need for remediation. It also should provide for effective coordination of all local, state and federal funds provided for basic skills instruction.

The plan should be based upon a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing basic skills performance and strategies for improvement should be clearly defined.

Interim goal refers to a stated level of achievement designed to indicate significant progress toward the goal of each pupil achieving at least the statewide standard of proficiency in the basic skills.

Major deficiency refers to a problem which must be resolved because of its direct, negative effect on the instructional program, health, safety or equal educational opportunity of pupils or sound fiscal operations of the district.

Minor deficiency refers to a problem which must be resolved, but does not have a direct, negative effect on the instructional program, health, safety or equal educational opportunity of pupils or sound fiscal operations of the district.

State monitoring visits to local districts may be any of the following:

a. County office monitoring (Level I monitoring) occurs on a regular basis to ascertain the district's progress toward local and state goals and objectives.

b. Program reviews (Level II monitoring) are administered by department program staff (Title I, nutrition, vocational education, etc.) as required by federal program requirements or in response to county superintendent's or commissioner's request.

c. Comprehensive program reviews are conducted by state-selected teams in schools with less than sixty-five percent of the students above the state minimum standards in basic skills and no trend toward improvement.

d. Other visits as deemed necessary by the commissioner.

Statistically significant refers to gain or loss which exceeds the probabilities of chance.

Substantial progress means achievement beyond planned goals or objectives for the year.

Weighted average refers to the achievement level in basic skills in the school or district. The level is determined by calculating the percent of students above the state minimum standards separately in reading and math for all grades tested on the minimum basic skills test each year for the three latest years.